



CALL FOR PAPERS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ARQUITECTONICS: MIND, LAND, SOCIETY

BUILDING THE SOCIAL LIFE: THE EMBODIED, CONFIGURATIVE AND DIALOGIC
KNOWLEDGE EMBEDDED IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

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MAIN TOPICS AND MAIN REFERENCES OF THE CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

n. 9 Design and History (Modernity and Tradition).

9. Architectural and urban heritage is no more a secondary field for research on modern architecture. On the contrary, the best architectural and urban designs are now growing in consolidated historical settings, where ideas are better converted in objects. Consider the words by P. Zumthor, R. Piano or Wang Shu, etc. Researches about Historical Urban Forms transformations are welcomed.

A high-quality project model to preserve Ortigia's architectural heritage:

history, modernity, tradition.

The island of Ortigia, Siracusa's old town centre, is characterised by a very rich architectural heritage. It is displayed in layers representing the corresponding periods of foreign dominations: by the Greeks and Romans in ancient days, followed by the Arabs and the Swabians during the Middle ages, up to the Spanish domination that stretched until the 18th century, resulting in the Baroque style used when rebuilding the area after an earthquake in 1693. These phases have created Ortigia's historical and architectural value. In its districts, life is vibrant and is inspired by the many artistic and cultural testimonies. These places need projects able to regenerate them in a respectful though contemporary way.

Ortigia's architectural heritage has a rich potential for users in terms of spaces, buildings, materials, while its charming views reveal stunning natural beauties. It requires projects able to harmonise tradition and modernity, focussing on some specific elements of the urban fabric, that is characterised by short and narrow streets.

A project model should be based on a method taking into consideration the historical process undergone by buildings, the architectural heritage as a whole, and its peculiar features. The aim is to create a system of projects able to interact with the surrounding environment.

Although many centuries have passed, cultural features are still visible; therefore, all projects should aim to preserve them through a "comprehensive transformation". It means to modify different features interacting with each other, in order to regenerate an area and make it the ideal place for new, contemporary needs: a mix of new structural patterns in order to trigger new urban dynamics.

The aim is to generate new social and cultural relationships within an experience integrating different proposals, such as the growth of a specific area such as Ortigia, that is residential and at the same time hosts collective spaces and services, as well as to foster dialogue in a complex urban environment.

These project proposals are not about single buildings, but they deal with the relationships between formal spaces and spaces where people actually live and work; they propose solutions from an architectural point of view, able to give voice to identities, cultural and local proposals.

In recent years, the island of Ortigia has been experiencing some works based on the above-mentioned environmental values, thanks to some architects who have proposed projects later acknowledged at a national and international level. An example is the *Artemision*, a project aimed at enhancing an empty space in *via Minerva*, facing the side of the *Athenaion* - Siracusa's Cathedral -. Such a solution inspires a comparison between the two, based on modernity and tradition. Another outstanding project is the regeneration of the Old Market: contemporary functions and solutions have been accompanied by structural works respecting the building's original design.

The present abstract is followed by a description of the methods that will focus on some proposals and models dealing with the selected areas in the districts of Ortigia.